

Arizona Commission on the Arts State and Local Partnerships



Bi-National Report with Mexico



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The Arizona Commission on the Arts is dedicated to creating, maintaining, and promoting a healthy cultural relationship with Mexico. Through grants, programs and collaboration the agency strategically carries out positive work with our Mexican neighbors. Programs and collaborations include the agency has implemented include:

Arizona-Mexico Commission

The Arizona-Mexico Commission (AMC), a premiere cross-border organization, champions Arizona's relationship with Mexico and provides leadership that improves the region and delivers opportunities, services and initiatives for business and personal growth. Chaired by the Governor of Arizona, the AMC is a public/private, results-oriented, membership-driven, 501 (c) 4 non-profit organization that formulates programs and action items that impact the Arizona-Mexico relationship.

The Art and Culture Committee of the Arizona Mexico Commission is for individuals, institutions and companies involved in the development, promotion, and exchange of arts and cultural activities, as well as other disciplines relating to art and culture in the Arizona/Sonora region, and individuals providing services to the art and culture industry.

In May of 2006, **Robert Booker**, Executive Director and **Mitch Menchaca**, Director of State and Local Partnerships at the Arizona Commission on the Arts were appointed by Governor Janet Napolitano to be members of the Arizona-Mexico Commission. Booker serves as co-chair of the Art and Culture Committee and Menchaca serves as a delegate.

Arizona Commission on the Arts State and Local Partnerships Division

The State and Local Partnerships Division works with state, regional, and local entities to conceptualize, research, design and implement programs for organizations and individuals that have a long-term impact in underserved, urban, rural and emerging communities; and to develop programs and resources that impact the work of the local arts agencies around the state. The Division manages the Commission's cultural tourism, economic development, and international initiatives.

The International Arts Program ensures representation of Arizona artists and arts professionals, from a variety of disciplines, at major festivals, conferences, exhibitions, and exposes residents in Arizona communities to international artists visiting the state. The International Program offers three small grant opportunities: International Arts Exchange, Arizona-Mexico Initiative and International Professional Development.

Other Opportunities and Resources

The Arts Commission uses larger grant funding to generate resources for Arizona arts organizations to present artists from Mexico. The Festival grant category includes over 35 culturally specific festivals that occur around Arizona. These festivals utilize talent from both Arizona and abroad, opening cultural windows for the residents of Arizona.

As a convener, the Arts Commission works with statewide service organizations, including the Museum Association of Arizona, the Arizona Humanities Council, and the Arizona Presenters Alliance. Working together creates a larger message to the field of the importance of cultural exchanges in many disciplines and types of venues.

Finally, the Arts Commission keeps close relationships with the college and university system, the state tourism office and other valuable stakeholders like the Consulate General of Mexico in Phoenix. These bonds help position the exchange of the arts and culture to a broader audience; strengthen Arizona's arts and cultural environment by exposing citizens to the rich traditions of other cultures.

Listed are highlights of activities and programs from 2005-2007. These activities were funded, coordinated or participated by the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

2007

- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts through the International Arts Program sponsored *El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro*, an exhibition of 50 stunning black and white panoramic photographs by award-winning Mexican photographer Eniac Martinez. Martinez retraced the 1500 miles route of the Spanish Colonial Camino Real from Zacatecas, Mexico, to its northern terminis in Taos, New Mexico. The Tucson's Mexican Consulate presented this exhibition October 5-28, 2007 at the Arizona State Museum.
- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts in partnership with Borderlands Theater and the Phoenix Art Museum presented Mexican poet Veronica Volkow in a reading on September 16-17, 2007 at 7:30 pm. The readings took place at The Loft Cinema in Tucson and at the Phoenix Art Museum. The readings were part of a book tour to promote the publication of "Connecting Lines: New Poetry from Mexico and Lineas Conectadas: nueva poesia de los Estados Unidos," a two-volume bilingual anthology of contemporary poetry from Mexico and the United States, published by Sarabande Books. Additionally, local poet and translator Wendy Burk and Alberto Rios read works from other Mexican poets included in the anthology such as Luigi Amara and Tedi Lopez Mills. Connecting Lines/Lineas Conectadas is the result of a unique partnership between the National Endowment for the Arts, the United States Embassy in Mexico, and the National Autonomous University of Mexico. Through this endeavor, the partners hope to connect people across borders both geographic and cultural through the vivid language of poetry. The tour has visited Washington, DC, Texas, New Mexico, and California and is managed by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, a regional arts organization based in Baltimore, Maryland. Community Partners include: U of A Spanish and Portuguese Department, U of A Poetry Center, The Loft Cinema, The Mexican Consulate in Tucson and the Tucson Poetry Festival.
- o Arizona Commission on the Arts staff attended the 2007 Summer Arizona-Mexico Commission Plenary Session in Tucson, Arizona. The June plenary themed, *Reflecting on our Past: Building for our Future* brought the Art and Culture Committee together to discuss bi-national projects, including Jim Ballinger, Director of the Phoenix Art Museum, discussing the new show *Mexico and Modern Printmaking*; as well as a variety of artists and projects from both Arizona and Sonora.
- o Through support from the Western States Arts Federation, the Arizona Commission on the Arts presented at the Southwest Arts Conference a workshop to discuss the aspects of international touring between Arizona and Mexico. Included in this discussion was a review of the legal requirements, information about artistic resources, and best practices related to international touring. In addition, resource materials about international exchange were provided to the participants. Pennie Ojeda, Coordinator of International Activities for the National Endowment for the Arts will conducted this professional development opportunity.
- o Robert Booker and Mitch Menchaca were invited to participate in a Bi-National Meeting of Border States and Regions in New York City. This gathering of representatives from U.S. regional arts organizations and southern border states and counterparts from the northern border states of Mexico and the northeast and northwest regions was hosted by Arts Presenters, the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Mexico Foundation for culture, the U.S. Embassy in Mexico and the Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (CONACULTA) - in an effort to further cultural exchanges and seed new bi-national projects in arts and culture.

2006

- o Alison Marshall, Director of Arts Learning at the Arizona Commission on the Arts, with Patrick Elkins Zeglarski, a teaching artist held a workshop for teachers in Nogales, Arizona to exchange best practices in arts learning from both sides of the border to enhance teachers' ability to use artists in their classrooms in Arizona and Sonora, Mexico. This workshop included participants from both Arizona and Sonora and representatives from the Instituto Sonorense de Cultura. Dr. Fernando, Director General of the Instituto Sonorense de Cultura will adapt the curriculum created by the Arizona Commission on the Arts into Spanish it will be used by his staff, teachers and artists in Sonora.
- o Arizona poet Marco Jerez's bilingual book of poems entitled *Poemas de la Vida y de la Muerte* was published and distributed in both Arizona and Sonora. Jerez, a cancer survivor and a professor of Spanish at the University of Arizona, document his fight against cancer through poetry. This publication was sponsored by the State of Arizona and the State of Sonora and was unveiled to both the Governor of Arizona, Janet Napolitano and Sonoran Governor, Eduardo Bours in the fall.
- o Arizona Commission on the Arts staff attended the 2006 Fall Arizona-Mexico Commission Plenary Session in Puerto Peñasco, Sonora, Mexico. The November plenary themed, *The Sonoran Coastal Highway: A Catalyst for Regional Tourism and Economic Development*, brought together members from both the Arizona-Mexico Commission and the Comisión Sonora-Arizona to discuss how the region can become a bi-national market from economic benefit for both states.
- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts through the International Arts Program sponsored Mizu Desierto, an Arizona dancer, to attend the Butoh Ritual Mexican Dance workshop in Tlalpujahua, Michoacan, Mexico in August. The workshop included 50 hours of intense training in Butoh and gave Ms. Desierto an opportunity to live communally in Tlalpujahua and to offer a final presentation with the local community.
- o Arizona Commission on the Arts staff attended the 2006 Summer Arizona-Mexico Commission Plenary Session in Scottsdale, Arizona. The June plenary themed, *Keeping Arizona and Sonora Safe, Strong and Prosperous*, brought together members from both the Arizona-Mexico Commission and the Comisión Sonora-Arizona to discuss border issues, including safety, health issues and a continuing conversation on cultural exchanges. Included in those conversations was Barclay Goldsmith from Borderlands Theatre in southern Arizona; he spoke about his theatre's work on border issues.
- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts through a Music Project Grant sponsored Arizona Arts Chorale's *Choral to Chorale, a cultural exchange*. This was a joint concert held in May of 2006 was between the Arizona Arts Chorale and the Coral Divertimento of Mexico.
- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts through the International Arts Program sponsored Theatre in My Basement, an Arizona emerging theatre company, to present *daddeadtree/ dadamuertoarbol* a bilingual multi-media performance piece in Méridam, Yucatán, Mexico. The artistic director of Theatre in My Basement created a network in a previous trip to the Yucatán with a local gallery owner.
- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts through a Multidisciplinary Project Grant supported Arizona State University Public Events' presentation of *Delfos Danza Contemporanea of Mazatlan* in April of 2006. Delfos was founded in 1992 by the Mexican choreographers and dancers Victor Manuel Ruiz and Claudia Lavista with the objective of opening a space for creation, exchanges, professional training and communication through contemporary dance.

- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts through Project Grants supported *Ballet Folklórico "Quetzalli" de Veracruz* in both Tucson and Avondale, Arizona. Established in 1985, this outstanding company has delighted audiences from Europe to Indonesia. Now under direction of veteran dancer Hugo Betancourt, "Quetzalli" has grown to be one of the most popular folklórico companies touring out of Mexico.

2005

- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts through the International Arts Program sponsored the Instituto Cultural Mexicano de Tucson's presentation of Pianist Maestro Jesus Maria Figueroa and Soprano Maestra Maria Teresa Martinez. This duo from Mexico City presented a concert and master classes at the University of Arizona and Sunny Side High School in Tucson, Arizona.
- o The Arizona Commission on the Arts through the International Arts Program sponsored Blanca Villalobos, to participate in the *Raices* art exposition in Magdalena de Kino, Sonora, Mexico. Villalobos, a Sonoran born artist now residing in Arizona was afforded the opportunity to showcase her work and network with fellow artists.
- o The Cultural Council of Yuma, through general operating support from the Arizona Commission on the Arts presented acclaimed Mexican artist Martha Chapa in the fall of 2005. Her work has been recognize throughout more than 200 individual exhibitions and several hundreds of collective exhibitions made in Mexico, Europe and diverse countries of Central America, South America and the Caribbean. This event received media attention and notice from the Consulate General of Mexico in Phoenix, Carlos Flores Viscarra, who would present Martha's work in Phoenix later in the year.
- o Arizona Commission on the Arts staff attended the 2005 Summer Arizona-Mexico Commission Plenary Session in Tucson, Arizona. The Art and Culture Committee began work on a statewide cultural exchange calendar. Events included the Mexican visual arts exposition *Exposición de Máscaras Diablos, Santos y Mas* presented by the Arizona State Museum at the University of Arizona.
- ? Mitch Menchaca, Director of State and Local Partnerships coordinated, in conjunction with the Arizona-Mexico Commission and the Instituto Sonorense de Cultural, a Border Arts and Culture Gathering in Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. This gathering focused on identifying cultural exchanges between Sonora and Arizona with those involved in the arts from universities and communities on the border. Participants included arts administrators, academics, and artists from both sides of the border.
- ? The Arizona Commission on the Arts, through a Professional Development Grant. sponsored Chris Danowski, an Arizona director, to participate in *Translocality: Discussing Culture & Change in the 21st Century* in Merida, Mexico.

An excerpt from *Poemas de la Vida y de la Muerte* by Marco Jerez



CHILDHOOD

By the accretion of infancy, the child
comes to be a creator,
profound in memory,
legendary in youth,
deeply innocent.

The guitar doesn't cry
what the lyre laughs,
and every rhythm waits
for the rites of drums.

The infancy that grows
in the poem
is childhood matured
in all things.

INFANCIA

A cumulando infancia, la criatura
llegará a ser creador
hondo en memoria,
legendario en niñez,
profundo de inocencia.

La guitarra no llora
lo que la lira ríe
y el compass siempre espera
los tambores del rito.

La infancia que crece
en el poema
es la niñez madura
de las cosas.

Current Action Items for the Art and Culture Committee of the Arizona Mexico Commission



Art & Culture Committee Summer 2007 Action Items

Action Item #1

To grow the membership of the Art & Culture Committee with individuals from Arizona and Sonora.

Tactic A: The Arizona Commission on the Arts and the Instituto Sonorense de Cultura will create financial sponsorships to help new members of the Arts and Culture Committee with AMC/SCA membership dues and plenary registration for one year.

Action Item #2

To maintain cultural exchanges between Arizona and Sonora.

Tactic A: Research and survey producing, presenting and exhibiting organizations in Arizona and Sonora and assemble a database of activities, needs and competencies.

Tactic B: Use the data collected to craft technical assistance programs and materials to ease and expand cross border cultural exchanges presentations.

Action Item #3

To support projects through promotion and technical assistance.

Tactic A: The development of arts centers in Hermosillo and Huachinera.

Tactic B: To support the 3rd Annual International Photography Contest in Arizona and Sonora.

Tactic B: To support Arizona and Sonoran artists in creating binational arts and cultural projects along the border with appropriate sister cities.

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